

new Office Action has been issued and the March 14, 2006 Office Action has not been withdrawn. Therefore, Applicants respond to the Office Action of March 14, 2006.

Claims 1-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Ginter (U.S. Patent No. 6,237,786), in view of Chang (U.S. Patent Publication 2001/0025369).

The publication date of Chang (September 27, 2001) is after the U.S. filing date of the present Application (April 10, 2001). Additionally, the filing date of Chang (January 4, 2001) is after the priority date of the present Application (April 19, 2000). Applicants note that a certified English translation of the priority document (JP 2000-117975) was filed in the present Application on December 14, 2005. Therefore, Applicants submit that Chang is not available as a prior art reference against the present Application.

Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-27 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No. 09/828,889

Q63958

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: June 14, 2006